DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 108 833 RC 012 103

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TITLE The Home of Whose Brave?: Problems Confronting Native Americans in Education.
SPONS AGENCY Ford Foundation, New York, N.Y.
PUB DATE 2 Apr 75
NOTE 28p.; Paper presented at the annual conference of the National Association for Women Deans, Administrators, and Counselors (Philadelphia, PA, April 2-5, 1975).

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS American Indian Culture; *American Indian Education; American Indians; Boarding Schools; *Culture Conflict; *Educational Change; Educational Discrimination; Educationally Disadvantaged; Educational Needs; Elementary Secondary Education; *Ethnic Stereotypes; Higher Education; Poverty; Preschool Education; *Reservation American Indians; Social Discrimination; Teacher Attitudes; *Urban American Indians
IDENTIFIERS *Native Americans

ABSTRACT

At all levels of education the Native American faces problems arising from cultural bias, poverty, and racial prejudice in white society. At the preschool level Native American children perform as well on measures of intelligence and ability as their white counterparts; but even then absenteeism, language and cultural differences, lack of relevant instructional materials, and problems of racial self-esteem begin to interfere with learning. For Native American children from reservation and urban settings alike, problems accumulate throughout their schooling; dropout rates soar during the high school years; few Native Americans attend college, and high dropout rates continue. Native American "failures" in the schools are not the fault of Native American students or their culture, but of the schools and the larger society. Needed changes in the schools include ridding the curriculum of racial stereotypes, discontinuing the use of culturally biased texts, training teachers of Native Americans in the culture of their students, employing more Native Americans at all levels in the schools, and encouraging the cooperative ethos of Native American culture. Needed changes in the society include economic assistance to insure Native Americans a decent standard of living, community control of education, and construction of local day schools to replace the boarding schools that separate young children from their families. (JH)

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THE HOME OF WHOSE BRAVE?:

PROBLEMS CONFRONTING NATIVE AMERICANS IN EDUCATION

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Paper presented at the annual conference of the National Association for Women Deans, Administrators, and Counselors, Philadelphia, April 2-5, 1975.

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As I lay on my blanket I thought about my school days and all that I had learned. I could talk like a gentleman, read, write, and cipher. I could name all the states in the Union with their capitals, repeat the names of all the books in the Bible, quote a hundred verses of Scripture, sing more than two dozen Christian hymns and patriotic songs, debate, shout football yells, swing my partners in square dances, bake bread, sew well enough to make a pair of trousers, and tell "dirty" Dutchman stories by the hour. It was important that I had learned how to get along with white men and earn money by helping them. But my death experience had taught me that I had a Hopi Spirit Guide whom I must follow if I wished to live. I wanted to become a real Hopi again, to sing the good old Katcina songs, and to feel free to make love without fear of sin or a rawhide.

--Sun Chief

(Sun Chief: The Autobiography of a Hopi Indian)

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INTRODUCTION

Covering the problems confronting Native Americans in the realm of education is a formidable task, not simply because the problems are vast and complex, but also because of the diversity of the Native American group along cultural, residential and geographical lines. In this case, some specificity will have to be sacrificed in order to cover as much ground as possible with regard to different levels of education and the special problems that each level presents for the Native American child or youth. However, we should keep in mind that not all of the points here obtain for all Native Americans. There are literally hundreds of different cultural groups falling under the broad rubric of "Native American." These groups are diverse in their values, family structures and religious beliefs, as well as their achievement in the educational sphere (31). Therefore, for example, in alluding to the lack of emphasis on competition in Native American values, I realize that this statement is a generalization. Many Native American groups do indeed stress cooperativeness over competition. In addition, this seems to be true for the most populous groups, such as the Navajo; but there are some Native American groups who do have an individualistic-competitive ethos not unlike that of the majority culture.

I shall consider the pre-school, elementary, secondary and college levels of the educational system of the United States with regard to the special problems each brings to Native Americans. Within the pre-school, elementary and high school categories, I shall make a further distinction between urban and reservation schools, as approximately one half of our Native American people are now urban dwellers

and their children attend public schools with black, white and other youngsters (1, 22, 19). Then, I shall indicate the major themes that cross-cut educational levels. Finally, I shall suggest some changes and policy implications which might improve the educational experience of Native Americans.

Before beginning with the analysis, I should like to draw attention to the title of this work: "Problems Confronting the Native Americans in Education." There is a message in this title as there is in most titles. Note, for instance, that I have chosen not to call it "Problems of Native Americans in Education." It is the central contention of this paper that the problems that exist for Native Americans are not problems of Native Americans, nor are they problems in Native Americans, but rather are rooted in the white social system. Despite efforts to shift the blame to racial inferiority, or "cultural deprivation" or the Native American family, the facts clearly indicate that white ethnocentrism and white-induced economic deprivations lie behind Native American "failures" in the schools.

PROBLEMS AT DIFFERENT LEVELS OF EDUCATION

A. Pre-school Education

1. Reservation

The pre-school experience is probably the happiest encounter that the Native American child has with educational institutions. At this time he or she is performing as well on measures of intelligence and ability as his or her white counterpart (8, 9). The natural zeal

of the children has not yet dimmed and the "curriculum" is by nature one which minimizes the cultural differences which later come to be damaging to the child. Head Start and other such pre-school programs have provided children with an opportunity to become acquainted with a wider world through field trips, projects and television, in a reservation situation where often only the school has electricity.

Perhaps as important have been the contributions that such programs have made to the physical well-being of Native American youngsters. On reservations where childhood disease has only recently come under control, innoculations and medical check-ups have been a tremendous help. Dental care and training in hygiene have also bettered the health of small reservation children. On some reservations, over one half of the population may rely on food stamps or surplus foods for survival. The diets in such locations are often protein-poor and carbohydrate-rich. Thus the nutritious meals which have been a part of many pre-school programs have been literally life-saving (14, 27, 28, 29, 30).

However, even at this stage, there are problems for Native American children in the school setting.

Attendance may be sporadic because the purpose of the pre-school has not been made clear to the parents. They may not feel much pressure to get the children to school every day in the belief that "all they do there is play and they can play at home" (32). Absenteeism is also caused by illness. Poor housing, the lack of central heating, absence of refrigeration and the prevalence of insects all combine to cause a good deal of gastrointestinal disease. Respiratory infections, especially middle-ear infections, are very common, as are household accidents which

can keep a child out of school for many days, making it hard to return and "catch up" (28).

For many Native American children, the pre-school may represent the first contact with English. Language problems may thus become an issue at an early age, as a person may find even the Cookie Monster hard to concentrate on if she can't understand a word he says (3).

Much of the material used at this level has little relevance for reservation children (4). The suburban world of Dick, Jane and Spot is foreign territory. So, for that matter, is the world of the great inner city, with its tall buildings and absence of trees and plains. One entire classroom of youngsters was completely confused by the use of materials depicting New York City. The teacher was eager to press on to innovative social-studies use of the material, but the children were still trying to figure out how people climbed up to the higher stories of the buildings. As there was no reservation electricity and no two-story buildings, explaining elevators took a long time, and since that used up the time allotted to the materials, that was as far as they proceeded.

Alaskan children are often presented with pictures of animals and terrain which they will never see in their entire lifetimes!

This is a time when teachers as role models are very important to the child. Almost every child admires his or her teacher more than anyone else except his or her parents. Yet there are few Native Americans in positions of authority in the schools. Almost all of the Head Start projects had white teachers. An effort was made to compensate for this by employing large numbers of Native American aides in the schools.

While this was a good idea, it side-stepped the issue of placing Native Americans in authoritative positions; and it certainly didn't fool the children. One day I was playing with a five-year-old boy in a Head Start classroom in Arizona. He took a handful of brown dolls and placed them in the doll-house. Then seizing a white "lady" doll, he said, "Now the teacher's here! School can start!" I picked up a brown "lady" doll and said, "How about her? Can she be teacher?" He gave me one of those boy-are-you-out-of-it looks and said, "No! Her's a aide!" The power relations of his school had already been learned by this youngster and associated with race (2, 3).

The white teachers who serve reservation communities are rarely well versed in tribal culture and are thus prone to mistakes in interaction that can alienate a child from school at an early age (4, 5, 6). The classic example is that of the white teacher who forced a Navajo child to wash sacred marks off his arms (too much cleanliness). The marks had been put there by a medicine man during a ceremony held for the child's ailing baby sister. Shortly after the forced washing, the baby died. No member of that family would attend the school after that. There are programs designed for teachers, to teach them about the people with whom they are working, but few avail themselves of the opportunity to take such courses (4).

2. Urban

The urban child has many of the same problems as his or her reservation counterpart. Illness, language problems and the lack of Native American role models may be even more pronounced in the city than

in the country, especially for the new arrival. The urban Native American youngster confronts a cluster of difficulties unknown to the reservation child, which have to do with racial membership and self-esteem. Other children may taunt and tease the Native American child, pulling on a full media-learned repertoire of racial stereotypes. Name-calling is common and fights break out. Teachers may not handle racial incidents when they occur, or may ignore the racial component of an incident, treating it "just like any two kids in a fight" (3).

Teachers may themselves be prejudiced. Unlike reservation teachers, who have chosen to work with Native Americans, these teachers have probably never entertained the thought of Native American students until a couple of them appear in the classroom (8). Some teachers overtly support the racism of the white students, as the teacher who says to a white child, "That's okay, you don't have to sit next to him /Indian child/." Other teachers may simply ignore their Native American students, going a full academic year without ever addressing them personally. Still others make an effort at cordiality, only to give themselves away in their reluctance to touch a Native American child. Some really come to love and respect their Native American pupils.

Another problem which is quite real often goes unnoticed. This is the use of the Native American image in the pre-school curriculum. Last year, while I was investigating the attitudes of white children about Native Americans, I began examining classroom decor, texts, story books and games with regard to their treatment of the Native American group. I recommend this experience to anyone who is genuinely interested in the education of Native American children. Some of the things a

person may find are: texts which depict Native Americans either as frightening savages or as dumb but amusing children of nature (in all cases, Native Americans are depicted as part of a past era--not part of the twentieth century); decals of naked Native Americans brandishing tomahawks for use on windows and rocking chairs; armed Native Americans as the central figures of large-piece picture puzzles; and one unique teaching device, a set of loin-clothed Native Americans on a rack for use as a counting teacher (the child knocks them down as he or she counts them!). Children are being exposed to these images of the Native American group on a daily basis, and Native American children are among them.

Because of the small number of Native Americans, it often happens that the Native American city child finds that he or she is "one of a kind," the only member of the group in a class. There is some evidence that four- and five-year-old Native Americans seek to identify themselves as white and to associate white with positive stereotypes. This is especially true for urban Native Americans who, because of their extreme minority status and in view of the contempt in which that group may be held by those around the child, may seek to identify with the majority group (3).

The urban child's poverty may impose a greater burden than the reservation child's, for the reservation children are like one another. The urban child may be especially embarrassed by poor and/or inappropriate clothing and may even seek to stay away from the "most important" school days--Spring recital, Valentine's Day (do you <u>remember</u> how essential it was to have something green for St. Patrick's Day, even if you

weren't Irish?) because of shame over clothing. This is a beginning of a problem which plagues Native American students up to and sometimes into college.

In summary, the major problems of the Native American pre-schooler are: absenteeism, language and cultural differences from their teachers (and in the urban case, their classmates), lack of relevance of materials and problems of racial self-esteem.

B. Elementary School

1. Reservation

Problems begin to accumulate for the Native American child at this level. He or she begins to fall behind his or her white counterpart in both verbal and non-verbal measures of achievement (5, 6). Most of the difficulties with which these children were beset in preschool continue and new problems are heaped upon them.

Absenteeism continues to be a problem for the same reasons--health, parental alienation and embarrassment over inadequate clothing.

Language looms larger as a difficulty now that crucial verbal and mathematical skills are being communicated in English and many youngsters simply aren't understanding a word in the classroom (5).

The culture gap, too, increases and causes new problems. Not only are texts, books and suggestions for teachers' lessons taken from a totally white perspective, but achievement tests enter the picture with their middle-class white biases (4). These tests are so rooted in majority cultural assumptions that it is almost impossible to ver-

balize how very foreign they are to reservation children and how useless it is to draw conclusions about these children from their performance on these tests. We know from the Black experience that once a test is devised that taps items with which the minority-group children are familiar, the Black-white scores are virtually reversed. The same would certainly be true for Native Americans. For example, let us see how you do in response to three questions that would give most Native American children little trouble.

Mini Test

1. What is a "forty-niner"? a game a miner a mule a dance

2. What animal helps make it rain? snakes crows turtles wild horses

3. How many days does a Beauty way ceremony take? one seventeen six none of these

Those non-Navajos who did well probably were lucky. The rest of you may feel uneasy. You shouldn't. Ignorance of a foreign culture is not cause for shame on its own. What is shameful is that we expect Native American children to have a very intimate knowledge of a foreign culture--the majority culture--and we penalize them for a failure to acquire that knowledge. What reading-group one enters, what track of math one is on, whether or not one goes on to college, admission to graduate or professional school, are all determined by scores on tests which are designed for and by whites, and which have been standardized on white middle-class children. Since it is the expressed wish of many Native American students to pursue careers which can help their own people, it seems ironic that access to such careers is dependent on their knowledge of white culture

and ability to disregard the cues of their own cultures.

It is important to note that when relatively culture-free tests, such as the Draw-A-Man test, are administered to Native American children, these children score equal to or higher than whites (9, 18).

Another problem centers around the demands of the white-oriented classroom and the degree to which it conflicts with loyalties to the peer group which is especially strong among Native American youngsters of elementary-school age. The norms of cooperation and the historical emphasis on community in Native American life help to create a solid age-peer group and in turn are reenforced by its existence. Murray and Rosalie Wax have vividly portrayed the solidarity of this group and its single-minded resistance to the white-controlled school system. Children may speak in inaudible voices when called upon, write in letters less than half an inch high when called to the blackboard or remain absolutely silent throughout the school day. The clash in values between the individualistic-competitive ethos of our educational institutions and the strong group loyalty of Native American children turns many of them away from the educational system (32, 33).

Teacher bias and curriculum bias count here, too. Teachers may tend to favor those most like themselves. This usually means they favor mixed blood over fullbloods. This can cause bitterness between the children and can deprecate the fullblood child in his or her own eyes (5).

History texts are especially likely to offend the Native American child. Children are taught that their people were savages and the enemy of the nation (7). They are required, like all American students, to revere those whose fame was won by the decimation of their people.

Teaching Native American children that George Custer was a hero is like teaching Vietnamese children to revere Lt. Calley. Perhaps the greatest insult to these children is that they are taught that Columbus or Leif Ericson discovered a continent where their ancestors had lived and formed cohesive cultural units for hundreds of years. These messages are certainly threats to a sense of self-esteem insofar as self-esteem is determined by a sense of group identity.

In addition to the day-school students with whom this section has dealt, there are two special groups of reservation children that I would briefly like to mention, with some of the unique problems inherent in their special situations. These are: (1) children in reservation boarding schools; and (2) children who are bused to public schools under the Johnson-O'Malley Act.

BIA boarding schools are generally and gradually changing, but have traditionally been geared totally to a policy of assimilation and cultural extinction. The speaking of native languages was forbidden in these institutions and children were severely punished for breaking the rules (25, 4). Native religious practices were also forbidden. Children were taught to dress, talk and (hopefully) think like white children. Parental visits were discouraged. Children's own culture was used as a threat (e.g., "All right, don't learn your tables. Live in a dirty hogan the rest of your life.").

While the methods are improving and the BIA is trying to clamp down on physical punishment, the model of "white is right" still is prevalent in boarding schools.

Many children are removed far from their homes. Alaskan children as young as six years of age are sent to schools in Oklahoma (4, 6). Few

Native Americans can afford the trip to visit a child in boarding schools, so problems of loneliness and bitter homesickness are the additional burdens these children must bear.

The relationship of the boarding schools to the economic ills of Native American life are not difficult to discern. Many families are so poor that sending a child to boarding school is the best way to guarantee that the child will be fed and clothed for the year (6). It is necessary in this context to point out that the average family income for Native Americans is about fifteen hundred dollars a year and that most families are large, the Native American birth rate being considerably higher than the national average. Thus it can be said that to a large extent Native American poverty keeps the boarding schools in business.

The children who are bused to the public schools have a different set of problems. Under the Johnson-O'Malley Act, school districts are paid by the BIA for each Native American reservation child attending their schools. This funding was originally intended to make special provision for the unique needs of Native American children, such as language training and remedial reading programs, but it has recently come to light that many of these funds were misused (11, 4). Schools compete with one another for these children because of the additional income that they bring in, but they do not use the funds for Native American children. Rather, such luxuries as pianos and football fields have been purchased with the BIA monies. Last year Native groups were given control of their own Johnson-O'Malley funds. This means that if a tribal council deems the use to which funds are being put to be non-beneficial to their children, they can withdraw funds. Hopefully, this will motivate the schools to utilize the funds in the manner intended.

The desire for these funds led school districts to oppose the bicultural and bilingual community schools which many tribes sought to establish during the sixties (17, 21). These schools realized that given a choice of public school or Native-controlled bicultural school, many parents would take their children out of the former and transfer them to the latter. Thus they (rightly) feared loss of funds.

Children bused into these schools face problems somewhat similar to those faced by the urban Native American children. They, too, must deal with unsympathetic teachers and administrators, prejudiced classmates, biased texts. In addition, they may have to rise at five in the morning, walk several miles to the bus stop, and then ride the bus fifty miles to the school (4). In the evening, they must repeat this process in reverse. The combination of this exhausting schedule with poor nutrition may leave these children in a perpetual state of fatigue which makes learning difficult.

2. Urban

Urban youngsters face the same obstacles they face in the pre-school. They do not have the distances to travel as bused reservation children, but they also are lacking in the strong peer support that reservation children have. The problems of maintaining strong racial identity and personal self-esteem are thus a continuing source of difficulty for the city-dwelling Native American youths (2, 3, 13).

They may have to contend with organized racism on the part of white classmates, as in Gallup, N. M., where a white pre-teen and teen Friday night source of amusement is to "catch" Native American girls and terrify and possibly rape them.

Thus, security and identity are added to the problems that would be faced by a reservation child.

C High School

1. Reservation

The accumulation of problems has led many Native American young people to drop out of school by the high-school years, and that trend accelerates during the high-school years and dropout rates soar.

Wax and Wax credit this to the lack of a cultural understanding on the part of the schools, which provide no outlet for the Native American traits of adventuresomeness and daring (32, 33). The high schools continue the tendency of the elementary schools to emphasize values which conflict with long-established Native American values. They also indict the white economic system with its discrimination against Native Americans in the market place. This discrimination is such that men and women with high-school diplomas are often unable to find employment. Thus, many young people, observing the failure of their educated elders, deduce that education is not going to help them move up very quickly, and they drop out.

Still others, confronted by the poverty of their families, feel compelled to leave school and seek employment to help support brothers and sisters.

The lack of college preparatory programs is somewhat of a problem, although there are more certified programs than before. There is not adequate guidance counselling, and many young people feel that they were mis-matched with a career. Deloria states that counsellors

are not up on college programs or on scholarship availability and that thousands of Native American scholarships go unused every year (7).

The SATs have all the problems of the other Princeton, computer-graded tests treated above. Native Americans do not perform well on them, and this limits their admissions to the better universities (34).

2. Urban

The urban Native American faces additional difficulties in high school because of the dating situation. He or she may find himself or herself excluded from social events either for lack of an invitation or lack of funds for tickets or clothes. Sometimes the young person may become involved in an interracial dating situation which places him or her under pressure from friends and family. Such emotional problems can make concentration on academic matters quite difficult.

Teacher expectations for Native American teenagers are often unduly low. Hearing that the children have performed less well than whites on standardized tests, teachers assume that Native Americans are less able students, which is not true. Thus, when a Native American student's performance is at odds with these low expectations, the teacher does not know how to respond. One gifted Native American student who is now attending an Ivy League university told me that whenever she got an "A" in high school, she was accused of cheating.

Guidance counsellors of these students may be even less helpful than those in reservation schools. Adult Native Americans who are now lawyers or professors tell stories of guidance counsellors who laughed at them when they expressed the desire to go to college. Urban Native Americans are at a disadvantage because they are being compared by the

counsellors to the white students at the same school, who may fit the mold of what "college material" is, better than do the Native American students.

D. College

Very few Native Americans go on to college and even fewer to graduate and professional school (11). However, more and more are going every year. They are, unfortunately, also dropping out of college at rates far above the white rates. To find out what college students of Native American origin are experiencing, I recently asked students from three western institutions of higher learning to tell me about their experiences.

Most students expressed determination to finish college, and almost all stated definite professional goals, most of which related to filling the needs of Native American people. The health field especially is attracting many Native American youth.

The major problem, which over 90% of my sample cited as their number one problem, was financial difficulty. Scholarships are often limited to tuition and the student may have a difficult time paying for books and meeting living expenses. Such luxuries as mod clothes and social events are simply out for many of them. These problems are often complicated by the fact that Native Americans, being older students, often have families of their own to support. Thus they may have to work full-time while attending college. Others expressed feelings of guilt about the burden their education was imposing on their families.

The second major problem for the college students was academic

difficulty. Many felt that they had been inadequately prepared for college. Language still was a difficulty for some.

The role of the Native American advisor seems to be crucial with regard to both of these sets of problems. Students felt that they needed someone to go to when the pressures got too heavy. The advisor seemed to play an important role--for good or ill--in the lives of all these students. He or she can make the difference between satisfaction and enthusiasm for college, and a grin-and-bear-it, embittered experience.

There was a definite relationship between spontaneous remarks about the advisor and the degree of satisfaction students felt with college. While it is difficult to determine the direction of this relationship, it does seem that a good advisor can see students over some rough spots, especially during the first year of college, and can guide the student into a happy experience. Of course, it can also be assumed that better schools will seek out better advisors.

Some students found social and dormitory life hard, with white curiosity and prejudice being difficult to bear, but this was a complaint heard mainly from those at the school where Native Americans constitute a very low per cent of the student body. At other schools, where there are many Native Americans, there seems to be a "critical mass" that makes a pleasant social life possible. Almost all of the schools which have more than a dozen students have Native American organizations and social clubs as well.

The college students represent committed students who have chosen to take this course. As such, they are a self-selected sample, unlike students at lower levels who are mor or less expected to be in school, at least until they are sixteen. The college students, it must be recalled,

are those who have been able to adjust to white-oriented institutions, and we must view their fairly high degree of satisfaction in that light. The factors which caused younger people trouble--cultural differences, white attitudes, testing biases--are dimension of life with which these students have come to terms. Either they have accepted the white norms or they have decided to clench their teeth and see the educational experience through to the end in spite of their awareness of the difficulties it may impose upon them and their families.

COMMON THEMES

Several major themes run through the spectrum of educational levels. These are: (1) cultural biases in education; (2) poverty-related problems; and (3) racial prejudice in white society.

A. Cultural Biases

Readings, curriculum, indeed knowledge, are white-defined and exclude information not deemed valuable by the majority society (5, 7). This is a distorted picture of reality, but every society presents reality from its own perspective. However, we are insisting that people of other societies and culture accept this definition of reality as well. Teaching techniques are consonant with the white values of individualism and competition (33). There is reason to believe that this is not an effective way to teach Native American children; in fact, there is some reason to question its effectiveness with white, middle-class youngsters. Some innovative upper-class schools are experimenting in kindergarten with blocks that require more than one person to move them,to stress cooperation

in the children! The classic contributions of anthropologist Jules Henry indicated that a classroom situation where one child's victory is another's defeat is highly damaging to the self-esteem of the children involved in the learning process.

Tests that have been standardized on white, middle-class groups are totally worthless in ascertaining anything about the ability or the accomplishments of children not reared within mainstream culture (34). The cultural symbols simply do not have the same meaning for children from two different culture groups. Beyond the lack of efficacy, such tests pose a potential hazard in that they can lead to a self-fulfilling prophecy. Native American children can come to accept the white society's assessment of their abilities and the spiral of failure begins in earnest.

B. Poverty-Related Problems

Native American parents have lacked control of their own communities, including their lands, ever since conquest left them economically and politically at the mercy of whites. Poverty led to the establishment and the perpetuation of the boarding-school system (8, 11, 22, 26). Slowly, individual tribes and nations are assuming community control of their schools, but many schools are still white-controlled, and Native American adults may feel awkward and out of place in such institutions. For this they are often blamed for being "disinterested in their children's education." However, "alienation" would be a more apt description. Teachers' lack of knowledge concerning the community, and their desire to shield themselves from the often painful realities of their pupils' lives, contribute to the split between the worlds of home and school.

The problems of fatigue and absenteeism due to illness are poverty-related problems which hold the Native American child back in school.

Another poverty-related factor is the lack of faith in school as a path to upward mobility which is often seen in Native American teenagers. If their educated elders cannot find employment and must go on welfare, they cannot see much value to education.

C. Racial Attitudes in White Society

Being a minority member in white society poses its problems of self-esteem and racial pride. It is difficult for a Native American child to maintain either of these in the face of prejudiced teachers, and/or classmates, or laws which allow a school to expel him for wearing his hair in traditional fashion. The fact that classroom materials and the mass-media propagate an image of Native Americans as savage, drunken and past-tense, or as objects of scornful ridicule, compounds the problem of racial pride for these children.

SOME SUGGESTIONS FOR CHANGE

What types of solution can we propose that would create a better social and personal milieu in which Native Americans could freely pursue their educational goals?

Some changes are already occurring, as in the innovative bilingual and bicultural programs, but much remains to be done. Yet educators cannot assume total responsibility for the quantity and quality of social change which must occur, if conditions favorable to educating Native American people are to exist. Let me, then, set forth two categories of desirable

changes, one of which will include those areas over which educators have some control, and the other of which must be accomplished by other sectors of the society.

A. Some Changes in the Schools

1. Materials used in teaching all children should be freed of misrepresentations of the Native American group. The use of the naked-savage image in early education should be stopped. Let them count toes!

2. Testing of Native American children with biased Princeton Testing Empire tests should be stopped. Such tests as the Draw-A-Man test are sufficient to separate out severely disturbed or retarded children for special schools. The use and development of culture-free tests should be encouraged. A child's intellectual growth over a given period of time can be determined by a comparison of early work to later work. It takes more time and effort, but it is fairer. After all, it is the steps taken by the child that matters, not where he or she stands on a meaningless national curve.

3. Teachers who are going to teach Native American children should be required to earn certification in Native American culture. They should have to take courses and pass tests to attain this certification.

4. More Native Americans should be employed at all levels (including such prestigious roles as principal and superintendent) of the schools. Scholarships should be made available to Native American students who wish to become certified teachers.

5. The cooperative ethos of Native American culture should be adapted to the classroom. Teaching techniques which encourage group

rather than individual accomplishments should be developed.

6. When racial incidents occur in the classroom, they should be handled immediately. The teacher who ignores such incidents is contributing tacitly to white racism.

7. Greater utilization should be made of funding available for the development of bicultural and bilingual programs for Native Americans.

8. Schools should provide comprehensive physical examinations. Problems of sight and hearing and of nutrition, which can impair the academic performance of children, would thus be detected early enough in a child's lifetime to be remedied before psychological damage is added to physical disability. In the same spirit, nutritious hot meals should be provided, free, for all children of poor families.

9. The impact of the Native American advisors on our college student respondents indicates the potential efficacy of creating such positions at the elementary and high-school levels.

These are all changes that fall into the educators' domain and which should be promptly implemented.

We cannot place the onus of Native American educational failure problems on the Native American child; but neither can we place the onus entirely on the schools. The substance of this presentation has made evident the extent to which economic deprivation and political powerlessness are to blame for the poor performance of Native American children in white schools. In this regard several major changes must take place.

B. Changes in the Larger Social System

1. Economic assistance sufficient to maintain a decent standard of living (health, nutrition, housing, clothing) must be provided Native American families.

2. Community control of their children's education should become a reality for Native American communities.

3. A country that can send men to the moon can build local day-schools in Alaska. There is no excuse for the separation of small children from their families such as that caused by the boarding-school system.

Once such changes are made, Native American children will quickly catch up to the rest of the society. These children are, at four and five years of age, animated, enthusiastic, and eager to learn. They come to school ready to love it. If they are turned off by the age of nine or ten, the fault is not with them.

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